(b) if so, whether Government have taken steps to meet the situation; and

(c) whether State Governments have also been apprised of the key situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) No, Sir. This year Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) introduced new models which have made it possible for Long Rang Forecast of monsoon to be given in two stages. The forecast issued on 16th April 2003 with an 8 Parameter model using data upto March was that the monsoon season rainfall over the country as a whole was likely to be 96% ± 5% of Long Period Average (LPA) and that there was a 39% probability of the rainfall being below normal (90-97% of LPA) However, the IMD forecast update issued on 9th July, 2003 with a 10 parameter model using data upto June was that the monsoon season rainfall over country as a whole was likely to be 98% ±4% of LPA and there was a 43% probability of the rainfall being near normal (98-102% of LPA). IMD also indicated that rainfall for July 2003 for the country as a whole would be 102% ±9% of LPA.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Financial irregularities in CSIR and DBT

2218. DR. VIJYA MALLYA:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Audit Report for the year 2003 by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has brought out several financial and other irregularities in the functioning of organization such as CSIR and Department of Bio-technology;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have already taken action or propose to take action to rectify the situation; and

(d) whether any responsibility has been fixed/proposed to be fixed on the persons found guilty of indulging in financial and other irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) and (b) In the case of CSIR & DBT the CAG report for the year 2003 has brought out some cases of non-acheivements of objectives, unfruitful expenditure, delay in project monitoring & delays in technology transfer, non receipt of technology fee etc.

(c) and (d) The issues raised in the CAG report have been addressed by CSIR & DBT. In the case of CSIR the same were conveyed through the mechanism of the action taken notes. These in turn, are being monitored, by the CAG. DBT, in additioin, also highlighted the fact that in scientific departments 100% achievement of the objectives is difficult to predict at the project sanction stage.

Converting plastic into biodegradable material

2219. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scientists of NCL have developed a technique to convert the commonly used plastic into biodegradable material;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the research work is completed and this technique can be applied for industrial use; and

(d) whether Government have any plan to market this technique to other countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Scientists at NCL have carried out exploratory studies by which a conventional non-biodegradable plastic can be rendered biodegradable by attaching chemically a sugar moiety to polystyrene. Compared to polystyrene, the sugar modified polystyrene showed a greater ease for biodegradation.